

## Break In

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# Break In

by [janewithwhy](#)

## Summary

The five times Ryuko broke into Satsuki's apartment.

## Notes

I'm really just super self indulgent and this is based off of that au where one character breaks into their friend's house but it's not their friend's house because they're an idiot.

# Chapter 1

## I.

She's only slightly taken aback by the sight on her couch. It startles her, but unexpected surprises can be dealt with, especially when this particular surprise is half-naked and mumbling in their sleep on her couch. Satsuki grimaces at the sound of a particularly loud snore but just continues to towel dry her hair as per her usual morning routine.

Briefly, she entertains the idea of calling the police, but why bother with unnecessary authorities—plus, all that paperwork and questioning: it would just put a damper on her entire weekend. The woman lying face down on her couch, one hand slumped to the floor, the other tucked under her head, doesn't look entirely too dangerous especially when she's clad in just her sports bra and a pair of briefs. Satsuki clicks her tongue when she nudges a pair of jeans with her toe. She looks around, quickly locating a white shirt thrown onto her dining room table, a jacket crumpled in a heap, and a pair of sneakers that looked as though they were kicked off immediately upon entering. She goes towards her door, surprised to find that no hinge is broken and that it is actually locked, no doubt from the inside. She'll have to ask how they managed to get in.

Deciding to be gracious and let the intruder sleep, she picks up the shirt and the jacket, both of which reek of cigarette smoke and mixed drinks, and decides to take the pair of pants with her, too. With hardly any thought, she loads her washer with detergent and sets it on the fastest program. Rifling through each garment's pockets before throwing them into the wash, she finds a wallet with two credit cards, a debit card, a decent amount of cash, and an I.D. with the name Ryuko Matoi on it. She takes the wallet back with her, throwing it onto the counter before checking emails and preparing her breakfast.

Satsuki decides to use the bigger knife for cutting up her morning apple, just in case. It's not like she's paranoid—she is entirely capable of taking on an almost naked stranger—she'd just rather be safe than sorry. Once her blender is loaded, she turns around, knife in one hand, the other ready to flip the switch. On cue, the noise of the machine starting up startles the strange woman on her couch, the arm under her head flinging itself up before her head itself—her fists connects with her own jaw.

Satsuki stops the blender.

“Jesus fucking Christ, Nonon,” Ryuko swears, rubbing at her face. “Are you trying to kill me?”

“Ah, so that's how you ended up here.”

Ryuko opens her eyes with a start taking in first, the unfamiliar person holding a large knife in front of her, second, the unfamiliar couch she's on, third, the unfamiliar apartment she

undoubtedly broke into, and fourth, the fact that she is semi-nude. She sits up almost too quickly, nausea rolling in her stomach and a headache stabbing at the back of her eyeballs.

“Holy hell, you’re definitely not Nonon,” Ryuko swallows harshly, eyeing the knife.

“No, but Jakuzure is definitely my neighbor,” Satsuki says, before putting the knife down so that she can empty her blender into two cups. “I found your I.D. in your wallet, so I know you’re not the one whose name sometimes seeps through the wall.”

“Uh, yea. Old college buddies,” Ryuko mumbles, glancing around for her clothes and the quickest exit. All she finds are her shoes by the door and her wallet on the counter. “Where —,”

“Your clothes are in my washer,” Satsuki says, bringing a cup of smoothie to Ryuko on the couch. The look she gives the cup makes Satsuki roll her eyes. “You probably have a hangover—this will help.”

Ryuko stares at her. “Do you have Asperger's?” she blurts. Satsuki’s brow furrows and she shoves the cup into Ryuko’s chest before turning away. Ryuko jumps up, suddenly, slightly unsteady. “Hey, wait did you call the cops?”

“No,” Satsuki growls. “Though, I’m starting to wish I did.”

“Whoa, man, I mean, I’m the one at a disadvantage here, being practically naked and all,” she says, using her free hand to gesture down at herself.

"Sit down, Matoi."

Satsuki kicks out one of her dining chairs without looking at Ryuko before she starts rifling through one of her cupboards. Ryuko gives her a look and wonders who the hell this strange, hot babe is and why she moves like she has a stick up her ginormous ass. She sits anyway, placing her cup in front of her, one hand settling on the seat between her legs, mildly shielding her body with her arm. She takes a sip from the cup and grimaces.

"Christ, do you know what sugar is?"

Satsuki leans back, head poking out from behind her cupboard door, a frown on her lips.

"Just drink it," she grumbles. The washer beeps down the hall as she finds what she's looking for and she just tosses a small container of ibuprofen at Ryuko's head before going over to switch machines. "Don't touch anything."

She comes back to Ryuko staring at her walls with wide eyes.

“You’re not a serial killer, are you?” she asks, eyes snapping towards Satsuki as soon as she enters the joint living/dining space. Satsuki follows Ryuko’s eyes flickering on a space between the wall and herself. The elegant collection of swords and knives, framed and hanged, is mostly aesthetic. Mostly being, she hasn't practiced with one in years, but they do make a handsome addition to her living space. At least, she thinks so.

"Hobbyist," she offers flippantly, settling into the seat across from Ryuko.

"Serial killing?"

"Collecting," Satsuki sighs, trying to stifle the urge to rub at her temples.

"Collecting body parts?"

"Are you done?" she barks back. Ryuko shrinks slightly back into her seat, drawing her shoulders together to cover some of her nakedness.

"Frowny brows has an angry voice," she mutters.

"Are you still drunk?"

Ryuko pauses, assessing herself seriously. "Yea, actually. I might be."

Satsuki rolls her eyes and drinks her morning smoothie, cueing Ryuko to do the same.

"How did you get in?"

"Hmm? Oh, uh," Ryuko scratches at the nape of her neck as she thinks. "I don't really remember. But it's sort of an old party trick. Or maybe old party necessity."

"You get locked out a lot," Satsuki concludes, drinking more of her morning shake.

"I want to get in a lot," Ryuko says into her cup. Satsuki watches as the woman grimaces again but continues to chug the contents of the cup to get it over with.

"I wouldn't have thought Jakuzure to associate herself with such wild debauchery."

Ryuko snorts. "Nonon? We were roommates, she'd lock me out all the time."

"Then old habits die hard."

"Apparently," Ryuko says, her turn to roll her eyes. As if remembering something important, she runs a hand down her person looking for something. Satsuki quirks a brow in her direction. "Fuck, where's my phone?"

Satsuki stands, taking her cup and Ryuko's with her to the sink.

"It wasn't with your things," she states, sounding bored while rinsing the cups before putting them into her dishwasher.

Ryuko jogs over to the couch, narrowly missing the coffee table with her shin, and starts rifling through the cushions. She comes up empty and Satsuki just sighs at the now disheveled state of her living room. She leans against the counter as she continues to watch Ryuko get increasingly more panicked as she bends on all fours trying to look under the coffee table and armchair to see if her phone had fallen there.

"You're sure? You didn't accidentally wash it, did you?"

"No, I'd never be so errant."

Ryuko groans before sitting up, a frown on her face.

"Shit, that phone was supposed to last me at least 6 more months," she grumbles. "That stupid, pink-haired troll better have it."

Satsuki pushes herself off of her counter and goes over to a small dresser by the front door that has her house phone on it. She chucks the receiver at Ryuko who fumbles when she catches it and accidentally bumps it hard into her own face. She rubs at her nose and just gives Satsuki a confused look.

"Might as well try to call it," she says with another eye roll. She's more amused than anything. "You do know your own number, right?"

Ryuko just glares at her before dialing herself and muttering something about how only old people have house phones. She lets the phone ring, setting it down so that she might be able to hear it if it was only set to vibrate. Satsuki strains her ears but picks up nothing.

"Damn it. I definitely lost it."

"Try calling Jakuzure, maybe she has it."

Again, Ryuko just stares at Satsuki for more than a beat.

"I don't actually know her number," she says, sheepishly before she looks down at the receiver in her hand. She smashes the button, angry that she's leaving herself a useless message on her lost phone.

Satsuki lets out a low chuckle.

"At least she lives next door," she says, moving back towards the hall. "I need to change for my run. Your clothes are almost dry so just wait and don't touch anything. And if you come into my room, I will use force against you."

Ryuko furrows her brows and makes a face as she watches Satsuki disappear into her room. Having nothing else to look at, Ryuko fiddles with the hem of her bra and tries to find a clock, noting that it's a little past 7 in the morning. She wonders what kind of manic, Amazonian, nightmare babe wakes up this early on a Saturday to go on a run. Taking in the pristine and minimalist decor of the apartment, she concludes that only a crazy person lives here; a crazy hot person with an ass you'd definitely see if you were falling from space at terminal velocity.

"Hey, what's your name?" Ryuko shouts towards Satsuki's bedroom. She doesn't get an answer right away and thinks that maybe she didn't hear her, but Satsuki emerges from her room, long hair in her hands as she tries to wrap it into a tight bun on her head. She's frowning.

"What does it matter?"

"Uh, because I just slept on your couch you Asperger's weirdo," Ryuko says, incredulous at the difficulty of answering such a simple question. "Wait, I take back the Asperger's part, sorry, still drunk."

Ryuko thinks she sees the corner of her lips tug upwards into a smile, but it's gone in a flash. The dryer beeps down the hall and Satsuki hesitates for a fraction of a second before she turns to retrieve Ryuko's things. When she comes back into the living space she hands Ryuko her clothes, turning her head away as the other woman begins pulling her jeans on.

"Oh, so you turn your head now that I'm getting dressed but you don't even give me your name, I see how it is, frowny brows," Ryuko says, stumbling while trying to put one leg in after the other. Satsuki just snorts as she hands Ryuko her shirt next. "Oh god, you use Gain don't you? Nobody fucking uses Gain."

"What's wrong with Gain?"

"Nothing. I just smell it because nobody uses it," Ryuko says, sniffing and shrugging her jacket on. "Are you really not gonna tell me your name?"

Satsuki says nothing as she retrieves Ryuko's wallet from the kitchen counter along with a set of headphones in a drawer. Ryuko's fixing her hair as Satsuki hands her her wallet before leading the way to her front door, swiping her keys from a hook on the wall as she lets in sunlight.

"You stone cold mother fucker," Ryuko grumbles, not bothering to put her shoes on, just grabbing them on the way out. Satsuki just hums in response as she takes a step over and raps hard on her neighbor's front door before locking her own once Ryuko's stepped out. She leans against the railing for a few seconds, waiting for a response.

"Knock again," Satsuki tells Ryuko, nodding towards Nonon's apartment. Ryuko doesn't even argue at being ordered, just takes her fist and starts pounding incessantly on the front door without pause.

"Holy fuck, it's 7 in the god damn mor—," Nonon swings the door open furiously, her eyes bloodshot and lids still heavy with sleep. She's wearing a pair of ratty basketball shorts and an oversized tee with only half of her hair in a hair tie—the other half looks as though she were sleeping on it. She pauses, takes a step back into her apartment to glance at her couch, then faces forward once more.

"Good morning, Jakuzure," Satsuki says evenly from behind Ryuko, the look of amusement clearly written on her face this time. "Sorry to wake you, but I found her on my couch this morning."

"Oh god, Ryuko, you fucking Neanderthal," Nonon swears, rubbing at her eyes before grabbing Ryuko by the cuff of her jacket and pulling her into the apartment with mild protest. "I'm so sorry, Satsuki. She does this sometimes."

"Satsuki," Ryuko mutters, wrapping her mouth around the name. Satsuki just smirks, still leaning against the railing.

Nonon turns on Ryuko. “Get in the fucking house and think about what you did! And say thank you!”

“Jesus, mom. Yea, thanks for the gross shake and not killing me or calling the cops,” Ryuko says, waving her hand towards Satsuki before turning around, meandering into Nonon’s apartment. “Sorry, I broke in.”

“You fed her?” Nonon asks, turning towards Satsuki. “I’m so sorry. She’s a pain in the ass—we went to college together and she’s visiting for a few weeks, things got out of hand last night, and long story short: it won’t happen again.”

Satsuki pushes herself off of the railing and shrugs. “No harm done, Jakuzure. Have a pleasant visit.”

As Nonon watches Satsuki walk off towards the elevators, she feels Ryuko poke her head out above hers.

“I wanna sink my teeth in that ass,” she says. Nonon elbows her where she knows her stomach is.

“Oh my god, Ryuko,” Nonon chastises. “She’s hot, but she’s such a recluse. I kinda wanna know everything about her.”

“Yea, she’s got fucking knives and shit on her walls, so there’s that,” Ryuko mumbles, leaning out more to watch Satsuki turn the corner down the corridor. She slumps against Nonon when she’s no longer in sight. “What a babe.”

“Get off of me. You’re still drunk. I’m still drunk. I hate you for embarrassing me in front of her, but we’re going to sleep for 5 more hours,” Nonon says, dragging Ryuko into her house. “You can sleep in my bed but don’t fucking spoon me.”

“Aw, it’s like you love me,” Ryuko laughs, closing the front door.

## II.

Ryuko wakes up to the sound of slow crunching. She assesses herself, eyes still closed, realizing she’s lying facedown on a couch again. Her head feels like it’s spinning and she goes through what she remembers of last night’s activities—lots of flashing lights, shots, beer chugging, that one girl who just had no rhythm whatsoever, Nonon yelling at a bouncer when he assumed her I.D. was fake, throwing up in an alley. The crunching continues, grating at her eardrums and she sighs heavily.

“Nonon, seriously?”

“Are you going to make this a habit?”



Ryuko inhales sharply and snaps her eyes open.

“Frowny eyebrow babe,” she mutters in recognition of the voice.

Satsuki is sitting across from the couch in an armchair, eating from a bowl full of cereal. Her long hair is in a ponytail and she’s wearing glasses. On the coffee table between them are Ryuko's clothes folded neatly, her phone and her wallet atop her shirt, a newspaper, a second bowl and spoon, and a box of cereal.

"You'll have to get up and get milk yourself if you want it," Satsuki says. Before taking another bite she adds, "Is that your nickname for me?"

"Triple B is the other," Ryuko mumbles, trying to sit up. Satsuki tilts her head to one side and Ryuko feels her cheeks turn a slight shade of pink. "Big bodacious booty."

"Oh. Did you talk about me?"

"You have no filter, do you?"

Satsuki laughs lightly, the sound of it taking the edge off of Ryuko's headache.

"You know, you are technically breaking and entering, although nothing is broken. You could do me the courtesy of answering my questions when I do you the courtesy of not calling the police."

"Jeez, alright, hold it over my head why don't you. Yea, Nonon and I kind of talked about you," Ryuko shrugs, reaching for the cereal box to add to her bowl. "Do you eat your cereal without milk?"

“Yes,” Satsuki says, taking a bite. Ryuko grimaces.

“You have weird as fuck eating habits,” she says, watching Satsuki swallow and taking notice of the muscles in her neck.

“More than you know,” Satsuki responds. Ryuko rolls her eyes but gets up, stumbling a bit, towards the fridge. She rifles through it before she finds one of those fancy glass milk bottles and pours some over her cereal before returning to her spot on the couch. Before settling in, she throws her shirt on, a thin, linen, navy scoop tee. She scratches at her butt.

“Don’t get too comfortable Matoi,” Satsuki sighs. “I’m being generous as I was only raised to be.”

“Uh huh,” Ryuko grunts, mouth full of cereal. She glances towards the clock. “It’s ten, why didn’t you wake me up at your stupid, ungodly hour of 7?”

“It’s Sunday. Sunday is a day of rest.”

Ryuko rolls her eyes, taking another bite. She mumbles through a mouth full of cereal, “You religious or something?”

“No,” Satsuki answers immediately. “But even I get burned out on occasion.”

Ryuko hums, slurping up milk and shoveling more cereal into her mouth. Satsuki reaches over and grabs the box, adding more dry cereal to her bowl.

“What do you even do? Besides look and sound like Hannibal?”

“I’m a lawyer,” Satsuki says, flippantly, as if this information is the same as her favorite color; she ignores the jab at her expense. Ryuko nearly chokes.

“So, you’re loaded?”

Satsuki sighs. “No, I don’t deal in corporate law.”

“Are you going to tell me what you deal in?”

Satsuki fixes her with a pointed stare, lips tightened into a thin line. “No.”

“Alright, alright,” Ryuko says, putting her hands up. “Nonon says you’re a recluse. Not me, you can get mad at her later.”

“I’m not—what? I’m not a recluse,” she says defensively, shoulders slackening. “I work a lot.”

“Nonon says she never sees people coming in or out of your apartment. She says you leave as the sun comes up and then you come home at ungodly hours in the middle of the night. We actually decided to think that you were a bartender or something, but this is cool,” Ryuko states, slurping again at the milk in her bowl.

“Nonon seems to pay a lot of attention to my whereabouts,” Satsuki says, feeling slightly put out.

“She thinks you’re hot but she’s preoccupied. At least I think, I don’t know. I haven’t seen her for 8 months.”

“But you’re here?”

“Well yea, me and Nonon? Or Jakuzure, as you so affectionately call her—we’re like that. We pick up where we left off in a snap,” Ryuko says, snapping her fingers in emphasis.

“We’re a couple of shitheads who banter a lot, but we mean a lot to each other.”

“Were you romantically involved, previously?”

“Jesus, I can see why you’re a lawyer now,” Ryuko chokes. She coughs. “No, we’ve just been friends. I’m in graphic design, she’s fucking composing for television shows. We’re artsy and we understand each other.”

“Oh,” Satsuki hums. She continues crunching at her cereal.

“I didn’t mean to offend you, but do you really have Asperger’s?” Ryuko blurts.

“No, Matoi, I’m—,” Satsuki pauses, unsure of how to describe herself. “I’m just reserved.”

“Dark and mysterious booty babe, okay,” Ryuko mumbles into her bowl. Nothing comes after that. They both just chew away at their cereal, lost at what to say. Ryuko adds more to her milk, stalling for reasons she isn’t quite sure but she likes being around Satsuki. The woman doesn’t have very many words, but she’s interesting and nice to talk to.

“You left a voicemail,” Satsuki says suddenly, breaking Ryuko’s introspection.

“Fuck,” Ryuko drawls. “Yea, Nonon had my phone last week... what the fuck did I say?”

“Mostly you just wanted to know if I would come drink with the both of you,” Satsuki replies. She leaves out the part where Ryuko started screaming about her gorgeous ass. It’s still saved in her voicemails: the only one. She doesn’t know why she just didn’t delete it on the spot, but when the time came her finger hovered over the save button and it just so happened that she hit it. At least, that’s what she tells herself. “Sorry, I don’t really go out.”

“Then what do you do?”

Satsuki shrugs.

“Take care of strangers on my couch, mostly,” she says.

Ryuko laughs gutturally, nearly toppling over. “Oh god, you might as well be a crazy cat lady. Unless this happens to you often.”

Satsuki hesitates.

“Actually, you’re probably the first person to stay more than one night in this apartment.”

Ryuko pauses, spoon halfway from her bowl to her mouth.

“You don’t have any siblings or family? You don’t have a boyfriend?”

Satsuki hesitates again before answering, wondering how much of her life she’s willing to divulge.

“I don’t find men appealing.”

“You don’t have a girlfriend?”

“I work a lot.”

Seconds of silence pass between them, Ryuko’s spoon hovering in the air, her mouth slightly agape. Satsuki sighs as she adjusts her glasses and puts her bowl on the coffee table between them.

“You’re single, you work a lot, you collect fucking knives and swords, you eat your cereal dry, and you wash stranger’s clothes in stupid detergent,” Ryuko says, listing off all she

knows. “You’re a lawyer, your ass is out of this world, and you go on runs on Saturday mornings. You fucking must be crazy if nobody’s snatched you up by now.”

“I’m not something to be snatched up, Matoi,” Satsuki says. “I told you; I work a lot.”

There’s a knock at Satsuki’s front door, so with a sigh, she gets up to answer it. Nonon is standing on the other side, looking cheery but altogether guilty. Satsuki does not miss the way her eyes snap harshly to Ryuko before looking into her own, a glint of embarrassment and carefully concealed anger hidden there.

“So, she is here,” Nonon says, clasping her hands behind her back. Satsuki does not doubt that her fists are clenched tightly. “I’m sorry this happened again.”

“Would you like to come in?” Satsuki asks, gesturing into her living room.

Nonon flushes with embarrassment. She puts her hands up in front of her. “Oh, no, that’s okay. I’m just picking up my trash.”

“Fuck off,” Ryuko says from the couch. She grabs her bowl as well as Satsuki’s and brings it to the sink.

“Ryuko! You’re in your fucking underwear again? It’s bad enough you fucking break in, but you have to put as much of your disgusting body on her couch as you possibly can, too? Shit head, I swear,” Nonon turns back to Satsuki. “I’m so sorry; I’m really embarrassed. I swear she’s only visiting for two more weeks.”

Satsuki just smiles down at Nonon and it makes the shorter woman blush furiously.

“She’s nicer to me than you are,” Ryuko says, stepping into her pants. “Maybe I should stay here for two weeks.”

“Take that suggestion back right now,” Nonon snaps, pointing her finger towards Ryuko.

“How ‘bout it, triple B, wanna hang out with me for two weeks?” Ryuko jests, waggling her eyebrows and zipping her fly. Satsuki, still smiling, says nothing but offers a slight hum in response.

“I can’t tell if you’re embarrassing me or yourself more. Get out here this instant, you low hanging fruit.”

“Sorry,” Ryuko mutters as she steps past Satsuki. “Uh, thanks again for not calling the cops. And for the cereal.”

“She’s a feral animal, Satsuki. You fed her once, I swear that’s the only reason why it happened again,” Nonon says. “All jokes aside, though, I’m really sorry.”

“Again, no harm done, Jakuzure,” Satsuki reassures. “Although, I would refrain from having third occurrence.”

Satsuki bids them good-bye and shuts her door. The entire way to brunch, Nonon chastises Ryuko for being an idiot, but demands to hear everything Ryuko learned about her.

### III.

“Get up! It’s Wednesday night for crying out loud!”

Ryuko jerks awake, eyes wide with fear and confusion, sleep and intoxication still clouding her head. Satsuki slams her front door shut, throwing her briefcase against her arm chair with a little too much force, anger written all over her face. She stalks over to Ryuko, hard lines forming between her brows and around her mouth.

“Do I actually need to call the cops this time?” Satsuki practically roars, stopping in front of Ryuko. “What the hell are you doing here, this is the third time!”

The adrenaline of being awoken so forcefully sobers Ryuko immediately. She notices the dark circles under Satsuki’s eyes, the stray hairs that frame her face, the vein in her neck that’s throbbing, and her shaking, clenched fists.

“Whoa, whoa, Satsuki is everything okay?” Ryuko says, sitting up, putting her hands in front of her.

“Nothing is okay! I can’t even expect the privacy of my own home anymore!”

“I get that, holy shit, but you’re normally a lot calmer,” Ryuko states. She glances at Satsuki’s briefcase, it’s contents spilling out from being thrown into the armchair. “Oh.”

Satsuki glances at it too, and immediately the anger passes and her body deflates. She straightens her back and turns from Ryuko, unbuttoning the top button of her shirt because it feels like it’s digging into her neck.

“Wait, are you just coming home?”

“Yes,” Satsuki says gruffly, removing her blazer.

“At midnight?”

Satsuki grunts in response, heading for her room while unbuttoning the rest of her shirt. Ryuko waits for the warning, but it never comes, so she stands and picks up her own clothes to throw on. She contemplates just bolting as she’s jumping into her jeans, but then she takes in the massive amount of paperwork that’s coming out of Satsuki’s bag. She glances around and really looks at Satsuki’s living space, noting that there isn’t a single picture frame anywhere on display. Satsuki comes out of her bedroom, changed into a pair of joggers and an old college t-shirt.

“What?” she barks. “Hurry up and leave, Matoi.”

Ryuko opens and closes her mouth, eyes darting between Satsuki and her briefcase.

“Are you... are you hungry? Last time I checked, people who work late don’t exactly take great care of themselves,” Ryuko says. She rushes on as she sees the vein in Satsuki’s neck start to throb again. “I mean, Nonon showed me this diner, it’s like two blocks down, I’ll pay or whatever.”

“It’s late and I have work tomorrow,” Satsuki tells her through gritted teeth. But she lets out a sigh and once again lets her muscles relax. “But I also haven’t eaten since this morning.”

Ryuko smiles. “Alright, then let’s go.”

Satsuki almost hesitates, almost makes some excuse, almost turns around to change her clothes, or do something else but Ryuko is smiling at her and her stomach feels like it’s trying to digest itself, so she takes one step and then another and suddenly she’s grabbing her keys off the dresser and slipping her bare feet into a pair of shoes.

“I’m ordering whatever I want,” she grumbles, opening her front door.

“Yea, go for it, I’ve got like three strikes with you already,” Ryuko says, following her out.

In the elevator, neither one says anything; Ryuko chooses to just stand there with her elbows up, hands linked behind her head, rocking back and forth on her heels. She tries not to pay attention to the way Satsuki sighs, hands clenching and unclenching, trying to rid herself of some of the tension she’s been carrying in her shoulders and arms all day long. They walk in silence down the street, too, Satsuki following just half a step behind Ryuko because she doesn’t actually know where they’re going. It turns out to be a pretty standard, 24 hour neighborhood diner, and when they get seated in a booth, the only people around them are haggard, young 20-somethings and at least 2 older men who may or may not be asleep.

“You left another voicemail,” Satsuki grunts, staring at her menu. “On Sunday night.”

“I kind of remember leaving that one,” Ryuko replies. “I think the line I used was, ‘I like your butt and I want to wear it as a hat’.”

Satsuki snorts, trying to decide between three different things to order as Ryuko sets her menu down. The waitress comes over and Ryuko just orders a burger with fries but Satsuki still hasn’t decided on one thing. She glances at the menu, then at Ryuko, finally she settles on the waitress.

“I want the corn beef and hash with one egg scrambled and one egg over easy, a strawberry milkshake, French toast, and oatmeal with berries and brown sugar.”

“Are you kidding?” Ryuko asks, after the waitress walks away. “I’m not even mad about how much you ordered but like, who orders those things?”

“Who breaks into somebody’s house three times?”

“I don’t know why this keeps happening, honestly,” Ryuko says, an apologetic look on her face. “I haven’t broken into anybody’s house in years—not since we graduated and I didn’t have to get locked out by Nonon and her ridiculous tendency to leave me at bars.”

“Isn’t that dangerous?”

“No,” Ryuko laughs. “Nonon would start fights and I’d finish them. She’d duck out as soon as the first punch was thrown and I’d just end up duking it out. We were always hammered, sure, but after fights, nobody was ever going to mess with me on my way home.”

They return to silence, Ryuko playing with the straw in her cup of water before the waitress brings them their plates. She watches Satsuki pour steak sauce out next to her corn beef hash, blueberry and cherry syrup on her French toast, and maple syrup into her oatmeal. The only thing she doesn’t alter is the strawberry shake. Ryuko wrinkles her nose but doesn’t say anything before digging into her burger. She tries to stall, but she’s so hungry, she sends up finishing before Satsuki has even finished one of her plates. Ryuko picks at the last remaining fries, dipping them in ketchup as she awkwardly watches Satsuki eat.

“You said you do graphic design?” she asks in between French toast and oatmeal.

“For packaging. I do like, stupid designs for shipping materials and product packaging, it’s whatever,” Ryuko answers, shrugging.

Satsuki hums. “Do you have siblings?”

“Not by blood. I’m adopted—I have a sister who’s my age and a younger brat of a brother. You never answered that question last time, either.”

“Oh,” Satsuki says, frowning. “How did you remember that?”

Ryuko puts her hands up, defensive. “If you’re deflecting because you don’t want to talk about it, that is totally fine.”

“I’d rather not talk about it.”

“Okay, why don’t you date people, other than the fact that you work a lot?”

The lines in Satsuki’s face deepen as she switches from the hash to the oatmeal. A part of her flares up at Ryuko’s honest, unfiltered curiosity. The other part of her feels like this interest in her life is suddenly filling a hole she didn’t even realize that she had.

“Most people are scared of me,” she shrugs, finally deciding to just be honest with Ryuko because it doesn’t feel wrong. She takes a sip out of the shake. “I guess when you spend the majority of your life working and not doing much else, people think you’re obsessive and unapproachable.”

“You’re saying you’re not obsessive and unapproachable?”

Satsuki looks at her pointedly.

“I’m saying that I’m less obsessive and more approachable than people think,” she says, finishing the oatmeal and moving on to the French toast. “I’m not obsessed; I’m a lawyer. I protect people and I take that very seriously. And maybe if people would grow a backbone and came up to me, they would see I’m not nearly as hardened as they think I am.”

She doesn’t even realize what she’s doing until it’s too late. Her fist slamming against the table makes the silverware on it rattle and Ryuko’s just looking at her with wide eyes. She almost feels embarrassed but mostly she just feels exhausted.

“My apologies,” she says, straightening out the plates in front of her.

“No worries,” Ryuko insists, waving her hand at the formality. “You know, I’m only here for like 10 more days, but you should be friends with Nonon. She’s annoying as hell but she’s good people. Plus, she thinks you’re hot; she’d totally die if you started talking to her.”

Ryuko watches Satsuki’s face soften. “Didn’t you say she’s preoccupied?”

“Alright, fine, twist my arm—I’d just use her to hear more about you,” Ryuko laughs.

“Why are you so interested in me?”

Ryuko tilts her head, a confused look plastered on her face.

“You’re not one of those people who thinks I need fixing, are you?” Satsuki continues.

“Jeez, not everyone has such sinister ulterior motives,” Ryuko says, slumping over to rest her head in her arms on the table. She yawns. “Hurry up and eat you pig, I’m tired.”

Satsuki makes a face at her, but finishes shortly thereafter. Ryuko pays and swipes a few toothpicks on their way out. The short walk back is silent, again, save for a few passing cars. In the elevator, Ryuko shuffles her feet and scuffs the bottom of her shoes against the floor. Ryuko just walks right past Satsuki’s door as they near it, fumbling in her jeans pocket and taking out a bobby pin and a few of those toothpicks before she kneels in front of Nonon’s door.

“You’re not—,” Satsuki starts, but stops herself. “Good night, Ryuko.”

“Good night, Satsuki,” Ryuko chuckles, busying herself with Nonon’s lock.

Satsuki shuts her door, leaning with her back against it, listening to Ryuko fiddle with Nonon’s lock. Seconds tick by, but Satsuki doesn’t move, just stands there listening to Ryuko curse. She could invite her in. It would be easy, just open the door, pop her head out, tell her to stop messing with the lock and just sleep on the couch. She could do it.

And maybe she’s about to, but she hears Nonon wrench her door open before muttering angrily at Ryuko.

“At least you’re breaking into my house tonight, Jesus,” Nonon says, sleep still heavy in her throat. “C’mon, you can sleep in my bed again tonight, but if you touch me I’ll break your fingers.”



Satsuki stands there listening to Ryuko laugh.

“You never want to cuddle, I wonder if frowny eyebrow babe likes to cuddle,” Ryuko says. Satsuki strains her ears.

“Nobody wants to cuddle with you, you trash baby,” Nonon retorts before Satsuki hears the door close. She stands there, holding her breath, trying to hear anything, but all that passes is the sound of Ryuko laughing really hard and mumbling she can’t distinguish.

She goes to bed, feeling exhausted and distracted.

#### IV.

She flicks the light on, surprised, but not altogether displeased, like the last time she came home late, to find Ryuko asleep on her couch. Glancing at the clock, she takes note that it’s one in the morning on a Friday night—a relatively early night for the start of the weekend to already be snoozing away on a couch. Setting her briefcase by the door and key on the hook above the dresser, Satsuki notices Ryuko curl into herself, shivering.

It’s been eight days since she’s seen the other woman, occasionally hearing her and Nonon banter through the walls. She’d almost resigned herself to a fourth meeting last weekend, but it never came, nor did another drunken voicemail. She’ll admit that she did fly off the handle the last time she found Ryuko laying there, but she couldn’t help it. She was so tired and so frustrated. Ryuko could’ve just left. She could have walked out the door as Satsuki changed her clothes, but she didn’t and instead they ended up spending a relatively pleasant evening with one another.

Satsuki still doesn’t know why she hesitated in asking Ryuko to come in. She still doesn’t know why she wanted to ask her to come in to begin with. Was it the company she missed? Or just the security of having somebody else’s presence be in her apartment? Maybe it was both. Ryuko’s unbridled curiosity about her life was refreshing. Vaguely, she wondered if that was pathetic, to crave somebody who was genuinely interested in her as a person rather than some other case that needed to be solved as her other coworkers saw her.

She liked that Ryuko wasn’t pushy but laughed at the irony that was their current situation—meeting only because Ryuko continued to illegally break into her apartment.

Ryuko mumbles in her sleep, shifting her arm between her thighs, trying to find warmth in herself. It pulls Satsuki out of her reverie abruptly, forcing her to realize that she’s staring at the woman, half naked on her couch. She goes over to the closet that she keeps clean linens in and searches for a throw blanket. Awkwardly, she stands over Ryuko. Does she just throw it on her? Does she tuck her in? Why does she even bother with doing this? She snorts when Ryuko mumbles words with no connection to one another.

She unfurls the blanket, flicking it away from herself, and lets it fall on Ryuko's body, watching as it drapes over her. Ryuko shifts onto her side, one hand immediately fisting the blanket, pulling it tighter around her. Satsuki bites her lip, watches Ryuko snore softly, and sighs before stalking back into her room.

It takes her a long time to fall asleep. Her bed feels too big, too wide, like there's too much space between herself and the edges and she's not sure if she's going to fall or not. She settles on her side, hearing Ryuko mutter through the night—before finally drifting off, she decides to skip her morning run and offer her day to Ryuko before she leaves.

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“Hey, Matoi,” Satsuki bellows, stepping out of her bathroom and rubbing at her scalp. “If you're up for it, I can skip my r—”

Satsuki stops towel drying her hair as she steps out into her living room. On her coffee table is the folded up blanket and a piece of paper sitting atop it. Just to be sure, she glances around, but there's no other trace of Ryuko in her apartment—no kicked off shoes or pile of clothes. Everything is exactly as it always looks.

Towel hanging around her neck, Satsuki walks over to the note but doesn't pick it up immediately. She chastises herself internally when seconds tick pass—it's not a bomb; reading it isn't going to make anything explode, she reasons as she leans forward to pick it up. It's folded in half, the side facing up just says *Sats*—. Taking a moment, she flips the note over in her fingers before unfolding it.

*Sorry again, this'll be the last time.  
Nonon is taking me to the airport tmrw afternoon.  
It was really nice to meet you!*

—Ryuko

Satsuki sets the note down and listens intently, not hearing any noise seep between the walls. She could go over. She could knock. She could ask her for coffee.

She ends up going on a longer run than usual.

## V.

She's lying between sleep and wakefulness when something starts scratching at her front door. She rubs at her eyes when it continues, sitting up in bed, holding her breath and listening. Satsuki knows exactly where the nearest blunt object is in her room, but it's half past 9 on a Saturday night. Her door swings open, banging against the wall.

“God damn it,” Ryuko swears in a hushed whisper.

Satsuki gets out of bed and quietly pads over to her hall. In the dark, Ryuko is setting something down on her countertop.

“What are you doing?”

Ryuko is so startled she falls to the floor, ducking down with her hands over her head.

“Holy shit,” she wheezes. “I’m reverse stealing, you ass! You didn’t need to startle me like that; I almost peed.”

Satsuki laughs while flicking the light on.

“You could’ve knocked instead of breaking and entering, again.”

“It’s less fun that way,” Ryuko says, dusting herself off. “Besides, I didn’t think you were home.”

“What is that?”

Ryuko glances back before stepping in front of the object placed onto Satsuki’s counter. She grins.

“You can find out after I leave,” she says, still smiling. “Whether that’s in like two minutes or whenever you wake up in the morning, it’s nothing big. Cute pajamas by the way.”

Satsuki looks down at herself. She’d forgotten she only slipped on an oversized t-shirt, forgoing pants out of exhaustion alone, most of it emotional, but part of it physical from the morning’s extended run. She flushes when she hears Ryuko chuckle.

“Anyway, Sats, maybe I’ll run into you sometime.”

She watches Ryuko turn, watches her walk out the door, watches the door close, the sound of it snapping her out of her confusion. Glancing over, she sees that set upon her countertop are 5 boxes of her favorite cereal. Rushing and nearly fumbling with the knob, Satsuki wrenches her door open. Ryuko’s only just about to put Nonon’s key into her lock.

“Wait,” Satsuki huffs. Ryuko looks at her with confusion, one hand hovering with the key, the other hand shoved into her jacket pocket.

“Did I forget something? I’ve been known to do that.”

“No, I—,” Satsuki pauses as she searches for words. Irritated with herself at not being able to find the right phrasing for what she wants to say, Satsuki reaches out, grabbing Ryuko roughly by the collar, and drags her inside.

“Christ, you do have Asperger’s,” Ryuko laughs. She trails behind Satsuki only mildly surprised when they pass the couch.

“We’re not doing anything,” Satsuki grinds out, flushing to the tips of her ears. She leaves Ryuko by her bed and goes to her walk-in closet, rifling through her things before she finds a

pair of basketball shorts and a t-shirt for her. Satsuki just throws them at Ryuko's face, clenching her fists and trying to hide the fifty shades of red she knows has colored her all the way down her neck. She turns her head when Ryuko moves to take off her shirt, laughing lightly.

"And here I was hoping," Ryuko chortles, finished changing. When Satsuki turns to glare at her, Ryuko jumps into bed and puts her hands up defensively. "I'm kidding, frowny eyebrow babe!"

"Just shut up, don't hog the blankets, and spoon me, you idiot. Try anything else and I'll break your hands."

## VI.

She wakes up suddenly, hearing a crash at her front door and moves to grab the baseball bat that's next to her bed. Someone is fiddling with her lock and trying to throw their weight against the door, attempting to make it give way. She grips the handle of her bat tightly with her dominant hand and with the other she jerks the door open.

"I'll fucking ca—," Ryuko roars, both hands now on the bat, raised above her head.

"Surprise," Satsuki answers, blowing a strand of hair out of her face. She looks frustrated.

"You're not supposed to be here until tomorrow!" Ryuko cries, a grin forming on her face. She lowers her hands and tosses the bat inside her apartment before enveloping Satsuki into a hug.

"I can't even break in sober, how do you do that when you're black-out drunk?" Satsuki grimaces when Ryuko squeezes too tight. "You're going to crack a rib, Matoi."

"I have magic hands. What were you going to do if you couldn't get in?" Ryuko asks, picking up Satsuki's duffle and bringing it inside with them.

"The sensible thing: call a locksmith and tell them my girlfriend drunkenly locked me out."

Ryuko scoffs.

"That's not a real break in."

# Epilogue

## Chapter Summary

I had a request, and I felt inclined to fulfill it.

### VII.

“What do you mean you forgot to pick up the key, Matoi?!”

“You said you were picking it up on the way!”

“I said get it on your way! So help me, God, Ryuko. This moving truck has to be back at the drop off location by 8 PM tonight and I am not paying a \$300 fee if it’s late.”

“Find your chill, babe, your eyebrow is doing that thing,” Ryuko says, reaching up and patting Satsuki on the forehead. The taller woman grumbles and continues her glare. It’s already 4 in the afternoon and there’s no way their leasing office is open this late on a Sunday. “Call a locksmith.”

“There’s no proof that we even live here yet,” Satsuki sighs. She glances at Ryuko and instantly the other woman grins. “Oh no. No, no, no. You are not breaking into our first house, Matoi.”

“Watch me,” Ryuko says, already taking out a few bobby pins from her hair and kneeling in front of the door. Satsuki watches her go at it, but after ten minutes, a lot of cursing, and Satsuki nervously glancing back to the street every time a car drives by, they’re still sitting outside of their home. Ryuko huffs as she sits back on her haunches, looking forlorn at the metal monstrosity that secures their home.

“If I get black-out drunk, I bet I could do it,” she contemplates.

“I’m not waiting around for you to almost go into liver failure,” Satsuki says, rubbing at her temples. “And who would help me unpack, while you’re passed out on the couch that’s still in the truck!”

“I was just throwing out suggestions, sheesh.”

“I could always break the glass.”

“Okay, that’s taking a break in way too far.”

“I, too, was just throwing out suggestions,” Satsuki says, defensively putting her hands up. Ryuko looks at her, mouth agape and eyebrow quirked.

“Don’t they teach you like, not to do those kinds of things in lawyer school?”

“Law school. Stop distracting me! I need to figure out a way to get into our house.”

After a moment of thinking, Ryuko makes a noise of epiphany before going around the front of the house, motioning for Satsuki to follow. Grudgingly and with heavy footsteps, Satsuki stomps after her, irritated at their state of affairs. Ryuko jerks her thumb at the gate, grinning once more.

“Gimme a boost will ya? I’ll let you in,” she says. Satsuki rolls her eyes but gets low into a crouch, placing her hand on her knee so that Ryuko could step into it. Ryuko tests her grip, placing one foot into her palm, but Satsuki rolls her eyes and gives her a look as if to tell her to get on with it. Ryuko jumps up and Satsuki flexes and, with almost no effort, she boosts Ryuko almost over the fence. She only had to place her hand at the top and swing her legs over to clear it. She lands easily, taking care to soften the impact on her ankles by landing in a crouch before spinning around and unlocking the latch to let Satsuki in.

“Why are we back here? Should I break the kitchen window so nobody in the front notices?”

“You’re so set on breaking a window, do you have pent up anger or something?”

Satsuki glares at her.

“Don’t lose your chill,” Ryuko sings. “Remember when we did that open house? I opened the second story window to check how quickly I could sneak out. It should probably still be open.”

“To sneak--what?”

“Jeez, not for anything horrible,” she responds, rolling her eyes. She makes a bowl with one hand and a lighter flicking motion in the other before swirling it around in front of her face.

“That’s illegal.”

“Not with a card!”

Satsuki reaches over and slugs Ryuko in the arm as she laughs, before they both move through their new backyard. The window on the second floor is indeed still open and Ryuko glances up at it. She could probably reach it if she were able to get on top of the tiered roof, first. They stand there looking up at it.

“So, boost me again?”

“Why can’t you boost me?”

“I’m not the crazy person who runs every other morning,” Ryuko says. “Plus, I’m smaller than you.”

“I think that’s the first time you’ve ever admitted that.”

Ryuko frowns. “You wanna get the truck back to the drop-off station on time or what?”

Grumbling, Satsuki complies, getting back into her crouched position. The tiered roof is taller than the fence, but Ryuko is able to reach it with both hands before kicking her legs and pulling herself up with a groan. Satsuki strains her neck, worried that Ryuko might hurt herself, or worse, fall through the roof of their house. Or maybe it was the other way around. To both of their dismay, Ryuko is just short enough that she can’t reach the window.

“Are you kidding me?!” she shouts, jumping up again, but only dangerously getting one hand on the ledge before letting go. “Sats, get up here and help me.”

Satsuki frowns.

“Is the roof going to hold my weight?”

“Sure, just leave your ass hanging off the side. I’m kidding! Yea, it’s sturdy,” she says, stomping her foot in emphasis. She lies on the roof, army crawling her way to the edge and hangs her hands and part of her chest over the side.

“What if I kill you,” Satsuki says, a worried look on her face.

“Whatever, the company gives me health insurance; plus, I’m buff.”

Looking skeptical, Satsuki backs up, keeping her eyes on Ryuko. With a running start, she plants her foot on the side of the house and jumps up before Ryuko catches her by the forearm and hauls her up (with only a little huffing on her part). Now they’re both standing on the first tier of the roof and Ryuko is looking at Satsuki with that pouty face again.

“Can’t I just let myself in and meet you at the front door?” she sighs.

“No, I wanna finish this! Gotta break in right! Boost me up and then you can take your turn, frowny brows”.

Satsuki puts her hands up in surrender before crouching for a third time. It goes smoothly, given that Ryuko only really needed just a few inches off of her jump to reach it. She pulls herself through the sill, but Satsuki sees her elbow crumple as her torso folds over the ledge, and she hears a loud thump just after Ryuko’s body disappears into the house.

“Matoi!”

She hears a loud groan.

“Matoi, are you okay? Ryuko!” Satsuki panics before she jumps up to the ledge and doesn’t even feel the burn in her arm when she lifts herself up and over the sill, almost too hastily. Ryuko is lying on the floor muttering and rubbing her face. Satsuki jumps down gracefully, satisfied that there’s no blood on the floor or a broken limb.

“Fancy meeting you here,” Ryuko groans, before she sits up, propping herself on her elbows. “Fuck, I hit my face against the hardwood floor.”

Kneeling besides her, Satsuki chuckles before taking a gentle hand to her chin, turning her head one way and then the other, scrutinizing her face.

“You and your thick skull will be fine,” she says, before she leans in and kisses Ryuko. She feels a hand on the back of her neck and Ryuko is about to open her mouth when she pulls away. Thumb and index finger still on her chin, Satsuki closes her mouth. “We didn’t break into our home for fun, c’mon we have to unpack. I refuse to pay that fee.”

“Can’t we like, you know, christen the place first?” Ryuko asks, wagging her eyebrows. Satsuki just rolls her eyes and leans forward to kiss her again, before standing and tugging her towards the stairs. It doesn’t take them long to unpack the van--the bulk of their stuff is supposed to arrive while Ryuko works from home tomorrow. The last item to be brought in is Satsuki’s couch from her previous apartment. By this time, Ryuko’s down to her sports bra and shorts, and her hair messy and coming out of its tie.

“Not so fast,” Satsuki mutters, walking backwards through the entryway.

After some finagling, they finally set down the couch in the living room. Ryuko folds her body forward over the armrest, face pressed into the cushion. Satsuki gives her butt a smack as she walks past.

“I’m going to go drop off the van and pick up my car,” she says, grabbing the keys off of the coffee table. It was crooked and she didn’t want it in that place, but it would do for now. “Can you watch the house?”

Ryuko sits up and looks at her.

“Duh,” she says, she points at a pile of things. “My baseball bat is right there.”

“Alright, hold down the fort.”

“Aye aye, Captain,” Ryuko salutes. Satsuki kisses her before she leaves.

When she gets back, all the lights are on in the house. She rolls into the driveway and turns the car off before walking up to the front door. She knocks, but doesn’t get a response, so she twists the handle. Ryuko is asleep on her back, sprawled across the couch, still in her sports bra and shorts. Satsuki locks the door behind her before padding over. She shrugs before she lays on top of Ryuko, slotting herself right in between her legs and resting her head against Ryuko’s chest.

“Welcome back,” she grumbles, sleepy. She drapes one hand over Satsuki’s back.

“I’m home,” Satsuki replies, a low chuckle in her throat. Ryuko hums, the sound reverberating through the both of them. Satsuki can feel exhaustion settling into her. “I can’t believe we had to break into our own place.”



“I can,” Ryuko mumbles, shifting under Satsuki’s weight so that they’re both more comfortable. “It’s like, full circle, or whatever.”

“Some kind of deja vu,” Satsuki says, sleep evident in her voice.

“Don’t wake me up with the blender tomorrow, ‘kay?”

“Matoi.”

“Hmm?”

“Be quiet and go to sleep.”

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